

**Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development****Grants to Named Recipients (AS 37.05.316)****Grant Recipient: Soteria-Alaska, Inc****Federal Tax ID: 84-1641533****Project Title:****Project Type:** Remodel, Reconstruction and Upgrades

## Soteria-Alaska, Inc. - Facility Repairs

**State Funding Requested: \$178,000**  
One-Time Need**House District:** Anchorage Areawide (17-32)**Brief Project Description:**

Soteria-Alaska, Inc. is a home-like, healing environment for Alaskan adults who are newly diagnosed with mental illness. This service is effective for veterans, rural natives, students, people who are interested in alternative treatments and mental health peer support.

**Funding Plan:****Total Cost of Project: \$200,000**

	<u>Funding Secured</u>		<u>Other Pending Requests</u>		<u>Anticipated Future Need</u>	
	Amount	FY	Amount	FY	Amount	FY
Other Funds					\$50,000	10
Total					\$50,000	

*Explanation of Other Funds:*

We have a funding request into the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation under the Special Needs Housing Grant program for some capital and operations. These funds are projected to be more than \$50,000.00. We will not request Capital Funds next year.

**Detailed Project Description and Justification:**

Adding sprinklers to the building will allow the home to expand to serve 8 to 10 people at any given time. The cost of the sprinklers include increase of size of water line, engineering, installation, fire monitoring panel, dedicated power, and painting. This is important for safety and expansion of the number of residents.

The external and internal accessibility upgrades will ensure that this home meets all State, Municipality, and Federal accessibility regulations. It includes expansion of doorways, corridors, and internal/external ramps. It also includes meeting accessibility criteria in regards to parking.

Renovation of kitchen and change in some appliances will allow people with physical disabilities to be more independent in their activities of daily living.

The general contractor and architectural fees cover costs of oversight, development, labor, bonding, insurance, etc.

**Project Timeline:**

This project will last no longer January 1, 2011.

**Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:**

Soteria-Alaska Staff

**Grant Recipient Contact Information:**

Name:	Susan Musante
Address:	401 E. Northern Lights Anchorage, AK 99503
Phone Number:	(907)333-4343
Email:	susan@soteria-alaska.com

Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? ☐ Yes ☒ No

## What is Soteria-Alaska?

Soteria-Alaska, Inc. is a home-like, healing environment for Alaskan adults who are newly diagnosed with mental illness. Soteria follows the evidence-based principles of Dr. Loren Mosher (former Chief of the NIMH Center for the Study of Schizophrenia and founder of the Schizophrenia Bulletin).<sup>1</sup> Soteria programs have proven positive outcomes. The Soteria model has been shown to be more effective than conventional medication and hospitalization at a 43% cost saving. This service is effective for veterans, rural natives, students, people who are interested in alternative treatments and mental health peer support.



401 E. Northern Lights  
Blvd, Anchorage, AK  
[www.soteria-alaska.com](http://www.soteria-alaska.com)  
(907)333-4343

### **Board of Directors**

Kenny Timberwolf,  
President

Eliza Eller,  
Vice President

Matt Joy  
Secretary-Treasurer

**Directors:**  
Dawn Macon

Ted Eller  
Bernie Ruskin

Dale Fox  
**Executive Director**

Susan Musante  
(907)360-6768

### **Consultants**

Aron Wolf, MD, MMM  
Alma Menn, MSW, ACSW

## Why Soteria-Alaska?

- People recover from even the most serious mental illnesses under the right conditions.
- Behavioral health systems are slow to implement services that reflect this knowledge and that are effective in achieving good outcomes.<sup>2</sup>
- The Soteria model has been shown to be more effective than conventional hospital care in the reduction of symptoms and long term social adjustment for some individuals.<sup>3</sup>
- Soteria programs cost less than conventional hospitalization.
- Soteria House can provide needed adult beds in the community.
- The Soteria model is effective in preventing a life time of chronic illness and saves money in the long run.
- Alaska has gaps in providing services to people who for a variety of reasons do not succeed in the conventional system. They are unsuccessful and costly in the long run.

## How is Soteria-Alaska Progressing?

- Soteria is a project of the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority who has supported its development and implementation.
- Soteria opened its doors in July, 2009.
- Soteria has gleaned technical assistance and support from leaders in the recovery movement, beneficiaries, and representatives from the Division of Behavioral Health, tribal organizations and leaders in the provider community.

## How do I apply to Soteria?

Call Bill Miller or Susan Musante at (907)333-4343.

<sup>1</sup> Refer to Soteria: Through Madness to Deliverance by Loren R. Mosher, Voyce Hendrix with Deborah C. Fort, 2004 for a detailed description of the Soteria model.

<sup>2</sup> Courtenay Harding, William Anthony and others have identified recovery studies and concepts in several publications and in a 2001 webcast (The Recovery Vision: New paradigm, new questions, new answers) that can be found at [www.bu.edu/cpr/webcast/recoveryvision.html](http://www.bu.edu/cpr/webcast/recoveryvision.html).

<sup>3</sup> Loren Mosher, THE JOURNAL OF NERVOUS AND MENTAL DISEASE 187:142-149, 1999, Soteria and Other Alternatives to Acute Psychiatric Hospitalization: A Personal and Professional Review

## ***Soteria-Alaska***

**Purpose:** To allow people newly diagnosed with mental illness to recover in a non-coercive, homelike environment, with choice about medication and course of treatment, using personal relationships as the primary intervention. A life of chronic disease, disability and costly hospitalizations can be averted for many people using this approach.

**Vision:** Alaskans diagnosed with mental illness will have access to a range of environments and services that change their life course from one of chronic disability to health and community inclusion. Soteria-Alaska will be one piece of the behavioral health system that supports this vision.

### ***Values:***

Non-coercive	Easy access to appealing behavioral health services
Recovery-oriented	Individual choice
Informed self-determination	Flexible and Individualized

**Mission:** Soteria-Alaska provides a safe, non-coercive, homelike environment where Alaskans diagnosed with serious mental illness recover from acute symptoms and avoid a life of chronic disability and poverty. This is an evidence-based, cost-effective alternative to hospitalization that is responsive to individual needs, desires and cultural values.

### **Outcomes of Soteria-Like Projects Compared to Hospitalization**

<b>Name</b>	Soteria and Emanon Houses	Crossing Place McAuliffe House	Soteria Berne
<b>Start and Location</b>	1971 and 1974 California	1977 and 1990 Washington, D.C. And Maryland	1984 Berne, Switzerland
<b>Recovery Outcomes</b>	<i>6 Week Outcomes:</i> Reduced symptoms similar to people who were hospitalized and took neuroleptic medications. <i>2 year outcomes:</i> Higher occupational levels More living independently Fewer readmissions than people with hospitalization and neuroleptic medications.	These alternatives were clinically equal in outcomes as hospitalization at less the cost.	66% of people in this alternative have substantial improvement in symptoms within 2 to 12 weeks with little or no drug treatment.
<b>Cost</b>	6 Months: costs similar (@\$4,000). Lifetime costs: substantially lower	Cost 40% less than hospitalization and subsequent care following hospitalization In 1993 there was a savings of \$19,000per person per year.	Cost 43% less than hospital care.

### **Soteria-Alaska's Success**

- Soteria has housed six individuals to date
- Three of the residents have been maintained successfully off of anti-psychotic medication
- One individual was found to have a wrong diagnosis. Medication was changed to address brain trauma and seizure activity. This was successful in curbing behaviors that were ascribed to schizophrenia.
- One individual started a college program
- One individual started a GED program
- One individual is involved in volunteer work
- One individual maintained part time employment while living at Soteria

These are individuals who otherwise would be patients at API or in jail. Soteria residents have compassionate support in a safe environment that is non-coercive. They can continue to participate in school, work or other community age appropriate activities. In addition, Soteria recognizes the importance of family and culture and provides culturally responsive support and therapy to residents and their families if they so wish it.

Following is a brief story of one resident:

Mary (fictitious name) lived in a remote area in a tent with her mother. She was prescribed medication that she did not wish to take. She had been in and out of mental health and substance abuse treatment since age 14 (much of it out of state). Treatment focused on medication that she stopped taking each time she was discharged. It is doubtful that she will ever accept medication as her primary treatment of choice. In the immediate two months prior to coming to Soteria House, she had been twice hospitalized--once to Providence and once to API. She had been aggressive toward her mother and had behavior described as psychotic. She moved into Soteria House at our request when she was at API. This reduced her length of stay and saved money on her care. Soteria is about one third of the cost of being in API. While at Soteria she chose to stop taking medication. We were not sure if this was advisable, but we supported her choice rather than have her committed to a hospital. She had some difficult moments, but Soteria staff had developed a compassionate, non-coercive and trusting relationship with her and provided one-to-one supervision when appropriate. Mary has been off of neuroleptic medication for 6 weeks. She sometimes takes something for sleep. She demonstrated some side effects of withdrawal from the anti-psychotic medication and sometimes experiences an altered state. However, she has maintained herself out of the hospital and is engaged in a recovery process where she is learning tools for coping with stress and altered states that do not involve medication. If she continues to stay off of medication she is more likely to recover, obtain employment and live a full life span. This is a young woman who we hope can avert a chronic path although she was headed in that direction when she came to Soteria. She has aspirations of working, marrying and demonstrates skills in the area of peer support. She is participating in a volunteer training position since coming to Soteria. Soteria is committed to supporting her through this process until she is ready and wants to live independently.

## **Soteria Needs**

### Operating expenses

- Staffing
- Facility
- Administrative (Insurance, supplies, etc.)
- Communications
- Equipment maintenance

Total Cost: \$500,000 + per year

### Capital

- Fire Safety (sprinklers)
- ADA compliance

Total Cost: \$200,000

### Other possible funding sources for Operations:

- Trust
- AHFC Special Needs Housing Grant (applied for)
- Fee for service (estimated at \$250,000)